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War Department
THE CHIEF OF STAFF
Washington, D. C.

29 December 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR ADMIRAL NIMITZ:

SUBJECT: Joint Intelligence Activities

Your memorandum of the 28th proposing close collaboration between the Navy Department and the War Department intelligence activities, with the view toward saving manpower and money and obtaining better results is fundamentally sound and must be done.

There is no question in my mind that commanders in all levels of the combatant services must be permitted to exploit intelligence potentials to the fullest and must be permitted and assisted in transmitting combat intelligence by the most rapid means. This particular matter grows increasingly important with the development of armored forces, air forces, guided missiles, as well as naval forces.

There is also the important field of foreign secret intelligence which you did not mention in your memorandum and which we developed from practically nothing before the war to a system of vital significance during the war. It has been proposed that this activity be placed in the National Intelligence Authority, if or when one is established, for the purpose of eliminating duplication and centralizing direction of this activity toward the purposes which have the greatest significance from the viewpoint of national security and policy. I think this is a correct view of the matter because the slender resources we have in this field must be conserved and the complicated nature of the work to be performed must receive the closest control of coordination, covering devices, security of sources and verification of reports. I see no reason which will preclude the assignment of secret personnel to the higher echelons of our combat forces if the need arises.

There is another factor which has been bothering me for some time and that is the establishment of a system where there is a direct and free exchange of all information which may be of value to both departments. The British had such an Intelligence Exchange Office as part of the War Cabinet and I understand it served very well. This agency is needed, in addition to the Joint Allied Committee, because of the character of some of the information involved.

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I feel that the exact pattern of the military intelligence organization and functions of the various services is bound to be somewhat dependent on the organization which is eventually directed for the armed forces, - whether a single department, two departments or three departments and that the roles and missions of the services and a firm determination of details must await the action of Congress and the President. I do think, however, we can at once get forward with an examination of the essential factors relating to the efficient use of intelligence regardless of organization, and devise methods and facilities in connection therewith.

To this end I will direct Major General H. A. Craig of the War Department General Staff, who is heading the Committee in the War Department studying our intelligence problems, to get in touch, informally, with whomever you designate, with a view to starting an examination of the problems mentioned in your memorandum and for taking such definitive action as may be possible at this time.

/s/ Dwight Eisenhower

Chief of Staff

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